

most abiding relief is to be found in that instinct for self-abnegation which underlies our aesthetic emotions. Accepted as a counsel of despair, self-abandonment would only set free the demons; but, proceeding from the influence of the aesthetic impulse, it is not merely the hopeless relinquishment of a struggle : it is an emotion that is strengthened and illuminated by feelings of adoration, trustfulness, and love which give the beaten soul an assurance of victory.

## §

Man's instinctive expectation of a cause for every happening appears to be the origin of the sense of injustice which has influenced incalculably the ideas of individuals and communities. If I am industrious and of good conduct —if that is to say, I act in accordance with the teaching I receive—I ought, on any reasonable view of things, to be prosperous. Success is always held out as, at all events, an incidental fruit of righteousness. But, as a matter of fact, this expectation is constantly belied. We see good men in trouble and oppressed, the wicked flourishing in prosperity, often, indeed, obtained by the oppression of the good. The crops of the religious are blighted, whilst those of a blasphemer come to harvest. This does violence to our reasoning instinct—our impulse to infer—and renders us dissatisfied and unhappy. Since first man became conscious of his condition his cry has gone up

against life's injustice. He may, in  
 some degree,  
 be reconciled to it by habit. And  
 religion offers  
 him potent consolations. It urges  
 that what  
 appears to be iniustice is the  
 consequence of sin.  
 is a discipline for the character, or the  
 inscrutable  
 ordering of an All-wise Providence, to be  
 accepted  
 without question in trusting self-  
 abandonment.